

## another step forward RIVERSIDE COUNTY



As the fastest growing county in California, one thing is certain about Riverside in the future: change is inevitable. And "change" is the focus of the DVD titled "Another Step Forward." This DVD illuminates the housing challenges that decision-makers will be faced with as western Riverside County changes over time. Foremost among the theme of "change" is that our subregion must manage future growth in a way that can preserve our way of life, our community, our land, and our open space. Regarding our need to house the next 800,000 people who will call western Riverside County "home" in the next twenty years, the DVD presents what will be among our most pressing challenges in the future: providing enough housing, increasing our housing choices, and placing housing in the right locations. In the end, we must be cognizant that one key to a successful future for the WRCOG subregion is for leaders to recognize that increasing the amount of housing and the variety of housing choices – ranging from rural estates to high density urban settings – will be a critical component to improving our economy, environment, and ultimately, our quality of life.

(The narrative for the DVD is provided on the back page)

Another Step Forward...

"Welcome to Riverside County, formed in 1893 by carving out a portion of San Bernardino and a larger part of San Diego County. The County's early years were linked proudly to the agricultural industry, with the areas we know of today covered by vast farmland. Over time these agricultural areas gave way to commerce, construction, manufacturing, transportation, and tourism, contributing substantially to the region's rapid growth.

Recent years have brought dramatic population growth to our area. Between 1980 and 1990, the number of residents grew by nearly 80%, making Riverside the fastest growing county in California. Today our County is home to over 1.4 million residents. Over the next twenty years, western Riverside County alone will need some 350,000 new homes, and some 375,000 new jobs for 800,000 new residents.

How will we manage this growth while preserving our way of life, our community, our land, and our open space? The choice is in our hands. If we continue to follow and develop at our current pattern of density of approximately 2.5 dwelling units per acre, 145,000 acres would be sacrificed by the year 2025 alone. The choice to develop our land at 4 dwelling units per acre would allow us to cut our consumption of land by almost one-third. The choice to develop at 6 units per acre would cut our consumption of land by nearly two-thirds. The concentration of housing at the right locations could perhaps save thousands of acres for parks, open space, and farmland.

We are faced with these challenges that will define our future: providing enough housing; increasing our housing choices; and placing housing in the right locations. These challenges will test our ability as a community to preserve our history, strengthen our identity, and foster vibrant communities. We want parks and recreational amenities, quality community design, walkability to our schools and jobs, shopping and retail convenience, and a safe and healthy environment, among other things. To not make a change or a choice about our future is making a choice.

Things never remain the same, regardless of how much we want them to. We would love it if our children could remain young and carefree forever, if we could stop time during those comfortable moments of our lives. But whether we are ready for it or not, times change. Things grow and life always has a new adventure just around the corner. Regardless of what direction we choose to take in building for the future, Riverside County will continue to grow. With thoughtful application, we can mold and guide that growth towards a vision that will help preserve our way of life – for our children, and for their children."

"Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better."

- King Whitney Jr.



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For additional copies of this DVD please contact:

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Narration by Sean Warner.  
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